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CULTURAL SURVIVAL AND THE OMAHA WAY

EUNICE WOODHULL STABLER'S LEGACY OF PRESERVATION ON THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY PLAINS

ELAINE M. NELSON

In the summer of 2004 I pulled into the rock and gravel driveway of a small blue home in Walthill, Nebraska, a community in the northern part of the Omaha Indian reservation. Feeling nervous about the large and unavoidable sign reading "BEWARE OF DOG," I knocked on the screen door. I was welcomed with wild barking from inside before I heard a man's voice yell, "Rambo! Hush up! Rambo, get down!" Startled, I nearly dropped my books and tape recorder. The door swung open. I expected to be faced with a Doberman/German shepherd/pit bull mix; instead, I looked down and was greeted by the large brown eyes of Rambo, a miniature dachshund pup. Then I looked

up and met the laughing brown eyes of Hollis Dorion Stabler—an eighty-five-year-old World War II veteran and well-known grandfather in the Umó'hoⁿ Nation of Nebraska and Iowa. "Come in, come in!" Hollis said, chuckling at my obvious nervousness. "Sit down"—he motioned to a chair in the front room—"and let me tell you all about my mother."¹

Hollis Stabler is the sole surviving child of Eunice Woodhull Stabler. Eunice Stabler, or Thátawesoⁿ, meaning "Pale Woman of the Bird Clan," was born in 1885 on the Omaha Reservation in northeastern Nebraska.² During a period of continued transitions and federal assimilation efforts directed at the Omaha people—and Indigenous people throughout the United States—Stabler remained inherently rooted in her Omaha heritage and lifeways.³

A product of the U.S. Indian boarding school experience, Stabler was propelled into a world and way of living that was drastically different from that which surrounded her on the Omaha Reservation the first twelve years of her life. Thousands of Indian children during the late 1800s and into the 1900s endured the United States' assimilation policies in attending federal boarding schools. Such institutions

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forced these children into traumatic experiences that included rules against speaking their tribal languages, cutting of hair, removal of Indian clothing and cultural practices, and even sexual and physical abuse.⁴ Many departed from these institutions only to struggle with identifying their roles within American society and their tribal societies. Some pupils returned to their homes, abandoned the instruction they were forced to learn, and reoriented themselves with their ancestral ways. However, other youths found it difficult to return home at all, for in many instances they had lost a connection with their tribal traditions, languages, and identities.⁵

Viola Martinez, a California Paiute, was conflicted in this manner. After she attended Sherman Institute Federal Indian Boarding School in Riverside, California, Martinez continued to pursue an education away from her home and her people. "However," she said, "when I did go back, I found I was unable to speak my native language . . . unfamiliar with the customs and traditions of my people and unacceptable because of my Anglo-oriented education and training." For Martinez, this difficult transition lasted most of her adult life.⁶

On the other hand, while similar struggles with identity may have only temporarily discouraged some boarding school pupils, others partially severed their ties with their tribes—out of both necessity and choice. Earlier historians of the boarding school phenomenon suggest that Native students straddled the fence between their Indigenous heritage and the fundamentals they were exposed to during their years of American education. For example, scholar Hazel Hertzberg observed that Indian students were "cut off from tribal life or their relationship to it had changed. Many of them felt the need for a more generalized Indian identity. . . . They lived in two or three worlds, and most of them were not quite comfortable in any."⁷ A Yankton woman, Gertrude Simmons Bonnin (also known as Zitkala Ša), experienced this after her boarding school years. In her studies of Bonnin, Native literary scholar P. Jane Hafen observed that the

exclusion and frustrations Gertrude felt were part of the price she paid for her early removal from tribal society. . . . She had sacrificed her tribal, communal self to the larger purposes of Indians in American society . . . her tribal self—her identity as a Yankton Sioux—became subsumed by a broader identity as Indian.⁸

Boarding school students such as Martinez and Bonnin often found themselves experiencing constant tension between disparate worlds that defined their identities as Indigenous American women. Yet other students under the same circumstances drew aspects of the knowledge they attained from American mainstream and grounded their lives in ways they defined as the best reconciliation of both worlds. More recent scholars of the boarding school phenomenon suggest that although these institutions served the purpose to relinquish ties between younger Indian generations and their tribal identities, the schools only convinced students to remain deeply connected to their heritage. Tsianina Lomawaima, historian and author of *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School*, argues, "Schools often strengthened rather than dissolved tribal identity."⁹ In many cases, boarding school policies resulted in "Indian students' stubborn refusal to jettison their Indian identity."¹⁰

Eunice Woodhull Stabler's life is reflective of this argument. Her tribal identity only strengthened following the years she spent in a boarding school. The forced American education she experienced did not dissolve her connection to her heritage. Instead, she strategically incorporated aspects of it into her Umó'ho' lifeways, and thereby resisted assimilation policies that forced her to dissolve into America's mainstream society. Her devotion to her Omaha heritage—despite being a long distance from home—remained engrained within her thoughts and actions during her time in the federal boarding school.

Omaha tribal historian Dennis Hastings once said, "We have to take the good from

our own Omaha ways and the good from non-Indian ways and try to go forward now.”¹¹ Eunice Stabler always moved forward with her life. By using certain tools she learned at the boarding school, such as reading and writing English, Stabler became empowered to preserve her culture by any means necessary. This culminated in the publication of her book, *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers*. This work continues to teach future Omaha generations about their lands, ceremonies, and lifeways. Eunice Stabler was a woman ahead of her time, and her early efforts for cultural preservation remain one of her greatest legacies.

SOURCE MATERIALS: INCORPORATING ORAL HISTORY

While the Eunice Stabler manuscript collection at the Nebraska State Historical Society is unarguably rich with information about her actions, interests, and whereabouts, some of the years of her life are still left without much detailed information. However, interviews with her son Hollis reinforced the power of utilizing oral history. As anthropologist and Omaha language specialist Mark Awakuni-Swetland states, “Oral histories are as much about remembering ‘facts’ and ‘dates’ as they are about providing a personal connection to, and explanation of, the past.”¹² Furthermore, anthropologist Julie Cruikshank emphasizes that oral versions of stories merge with written accounts in Indigenous studies: “Combining the two kinds of accounts does not really give us a synthesis, the ‘real story.’ Instead, both of them have to be understood as windows on the way the past is constructed and discussed in different contexts.”¹³ Hollis Stabler’s recollections opened doors to his mother’s life experiences. His memories enrich the facts that are found on the pages of her past.¹⁴

UMÓ^NHO^N HISTORY

On December 23, 2002, at the age of eighty-four, Hollis Stabler wrote in his journal,

Today I finally started to gather stories, pictures and anything about my mother Eunice. . . . My mother was different . . . because of her family background and her parents. [My grandfather] was a man of a good Omaha family. . . . [My grandmother] was full blood Omaha . . . raised in the old traditional way. So Eunice had the advantage of all this.¹⁵

The Omaha tribe arrived in Nebraska near the Missouri River in the mid-1700s. Omaha oral tradition holds they originated “near a great body of water” in a wooded area, most likely somewhere within the Great Lakes region.¹⁶ At first the Omaha had several encounters with European trading parties, but they did not become accustomed to the constant existence of Europeans and Euro-Americans until the late eighteenth century. Having settled along the western bank of the Missouri River in present-day Nebraska, the Omaha people became very involved with the French and their fur trade system. While such contact pulled the Omaha “conclusively into the orbit of external economic and political systems,” it also exposed them to life-threatening circumstances.¹⁷ Foreign diseases, especially smallpox, devastated the Omaha tribe, and as a result of the most drastic epidemic scourge in the late eighteenth century, their tribal population fell from more than 2,000 to about 900 in 1801. The disease not only killed many Umóⁿhoⁿ people, it ultimately attacked their ways of living and resulted in a partial loss of their traditional tribal culture. These deaths, particularly among Omaha leadership, caused losses of cultural memory: “Visions were no longer explicated, ceremonies no longer practiced, knowledge lost.”¹⁸

While diseases threatened the Omaha, their involvement in the fur trade system resulted in additional social changes. Eventually, the Omaha economic system shifted from subsistence to a more intense level of production. This change caused the Omaha to become dependent on the new American market as opposed to their own survival tactics. In gaining

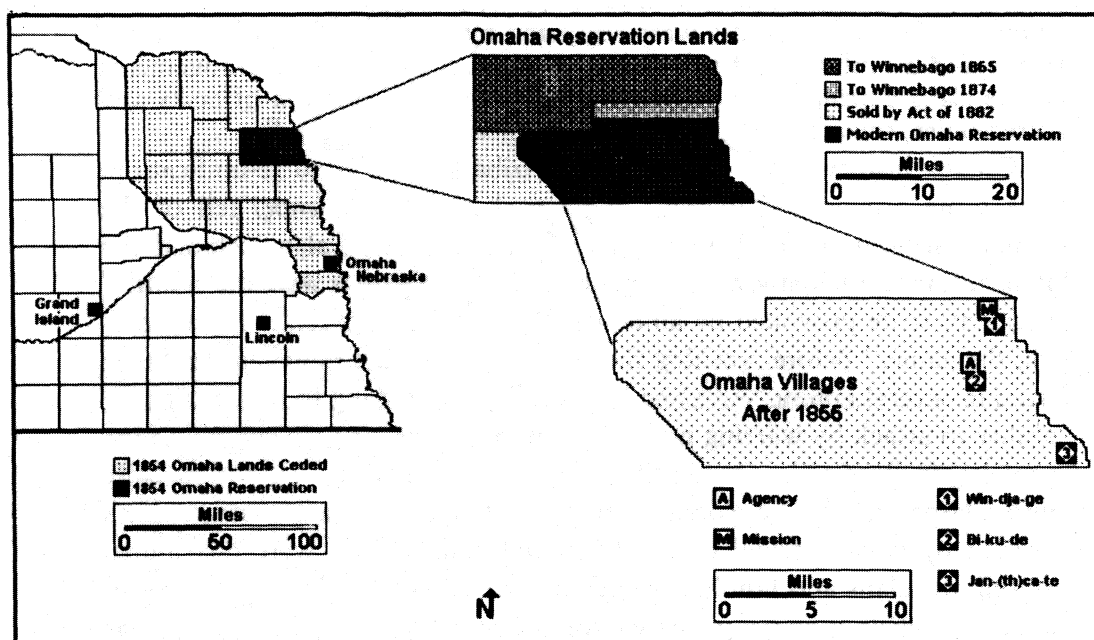


FIG. 1. Map of Omaha villages. No. 1 is Win-dja-ge (Village of the Make-Believe White Man); No. 2 is Bi-ku-de; No. 3 is Jan-(th)ca-te (Wood Eaters Village). Courtesy of Mark Awakuni-Swetland, *Dance Lodges of the Omaha People: Building from Memory* (New York: Routledge, 2001; reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008, p. 6).

weapons and horses, the Omaha shifted from an agriculturally based economy to a hunting-based economy.¹⁹

Umó^hoⁿ involvement with the trade system and consistent presence at the trading posts has been termed a “cultural convergence,” a place where the Indians were exposed to the new ways that were “seeping into their lives.” Trading posts also became places where traders and the Omaha interacted within each other’s communities.²⁰ This involvement not only encouraged an exchange of cultural practices, but it also resulted in many unions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals. These marriages created a generation of offspring that greatly influenced future tribal attitudes, divisions, and politics.

One child of such a union who became significant within the Omaha Nation was Joseph La Flesche Jr. (Iⁿshtámoⁿze, meaning “Iron Eyes”). He held a significant role in “shaping the future” of the Umó^hoⁿ through his participation in the tribe’s treaty negotiations with

the United States, and also due to his attitude and beliefs that if his people looked ahead, they would “see nothing but the white man.”²¹ La Flesche was instrumental in building what is known as the “Village of Make-Believe White Men,” an Omaha village comprised of modern log homes and agriculture that replicated small farming communities found throughout America.

While some Omaha families moved into this village, most continued to live in traditional communities of earth lodges and tipi settlements (Fig. 1). The heaviest concentration of earth lodge dwellings was built in the village Bi-ku-de, also known as íshkadabi, or those “who dwell in earth lodges” and “considered the most conservative” of the Umó^hoⁿ tribe.²² This physical split within the Omaha community reflects the opposing views that perplexed tribal leaders about their people’s future. Should they attempt to adapt to the “white man” or “American” ways, or should they hold tightly to their traditional practices?

Eunice Stabler's mother, New Moon (or Lucy Harlan), was born to an Umóⁿhoⁿ family that lived in the village of Bi-ku-de. Stabler's father, Long Wing (or Spafford Woodhull), on the other hand, was born and grew up in the Omaha village of the Make-Believe White Men with La Flesche and other Omaha families who were deemed "modern" by the standards of missionaries and government agents.²³ Although their match seemed unlikely, Stabler's mother and father engaged in a union that followed traditional Umóⁿhoⁿ practices. Once married, her parents cultivated a family that was rooted in a deep understanding of Omaha identity. They also taught their children skills for maintaining their ancestral heritage in light of the surrounding American mainstream society. Eunice Stabler adopted these concepts of survival at a very early age.

Stabler's mother, New Moon, was born into the Iⁿshtásuⁿda clan, or the Lightning and Thunder Clan, of the Omaha tribe and was the daughter of two Omaha Indians.²⁴ "So you see," Stabler later wrote, "my mother's every ounce of blood was that of an Omaha Indian."²⁵ Although New Moon's parents taught her to practice the traditional ways, she also received an American education, which is most likely the time when she obtained her English name, Lucy Harlan.²⁶ But New Moon's education did not last long. "She had very limited schooling, two years at the Omaha Mission School and two years at a country day school," Eunice Stabler remembers. Although New Moon had been exposed to a non-Indian education, Stabler remembers her mother as a woman who had grown up under her parents' much-disciplined teachings of the Umóⁿhoⁿ way and had learned what it meant to become an Omaha woman.²⁷

STABLER'S CHILDHOOD

New Moon was fourteen when she married Spafford Woodhull and entered into the Wazhíⁿga itazhi clan, or Bird Clan, a subclan of the Thátada clan.²⁸ "My father's English name was Spafford Woodhull," Eunice Stabler

wrote. However, his "childhood Omaha name" was Long Wing, which refers specifically to the wings of an eagle.²⁹ Born in 1851, Long Wing descended from a hereditary chieftain line within the Thátada clan. Most of Long Wing's relatives—his grandfather and father included—served terms on the Council of Seven Chiefs, the Umóⁿhoⁿ tribe's governing council. Long Wing's mother, Rosalie Dorion, was the daughter of a French-Omaha union from the early nineteenth century.³⁰ According to Stabler, her father was "reared in the strictest Omaha Indian culture of a hereditary chieftain's son and heir by his mother."³¹

However, Long Wing's childhood deviated from such strict Omaha traditions, for he attended the Omaha Indian Mission School. He also grew up in the Village of the Make-Believe White Men and eventually adopted some of the earlier views of Joseph La Flesche that the Omaha would be forced to adapt to the ways of encroaching Americans. While La Flesche believed that to avoid conflict the Omaha tribe would need to appear "civilized," he never encouraged the notion of assimilation. Rather, he believed this process should occur "through accommodation to Omaha traditions, not through assimilation to white ways."³² Thus, Long Wing was susceptible to the beliefs that he and his family would have to adapt in order to survive the ensuing ways of modern America.

On November 18, 1885, in Thurston County, Nebraska, Thátawesoⁿ was born to New Moon and Long Wing. Throughout her childhood and adolescence, Eunice was reared toward understanding the "Omaha way"—the shared responsibilities, customs, and practices stemming from Omaha knowledge—an education in which she was deeply rooted throughout her life. Her mother and father passed this knowledge to all of their seven children. As the family's chief caretaker, New Moon taught her children to treat "elders with respect, to be particular in the use of the proper terms of relationship, to be peaceable with one another, and to obey their parents."³³ For young Eunice in particular, she was rooted in understanding the

ways of Omaha womanhood from her mother's teachings: "The girl was taught to . . . assume the role of caretaker of the younger children," for "[u]pon her depended much of the livelihood of the people—the preparation of food, of shelter, of clothing. . . . In return, she was regarded with esteem, her wishes respected."³⁴

Stabler's two most prevalent memories of her childhood involved a tipi and a church, two places she understood as part of her home and Umóⁿhoⁿ community. To Stabler, the tipi that her mother took everywhere with the family was one manner in which she taught the Omaha way to her children. Stabler wrote,

There were many delights of Indian camp life, the Tipi, the home, its ready access to the open air, no stairways, halls, no opening of reluctant doors, but only the parting of the canvas and the world is before us as wide as the horizon and high as the heavens.³⁵

She remembered spending much of her childhood in tipis, whether it was at powwows and ceremonies or in the family tipi. Stabler later wrote,

Often at night we children would lay awake and watch the stars as they moved slowly across the central opening of the tipi. We would count them . . . watch the soft, fleecy clouds go by . . . the moon rise gently over the horizon around the clear and silent camp, lighting the wide rolling prairie. . . . How the scenes of my childhood beckon to me.³⁶

To Stabler the tipi—the home—was central to her livelihood. However, her autobiographical notes reveal scenes from her childhood that represent a different side of her youth—years spent in the nearby church. Stabler's father, Long Wing, had been long involved in the Omaha Presbyterian Mission Church, first as a student at the mission school and later as an interpreter, translator, and leader in the church. As a result of his involvement, Stabler's father frequently exposed his children to the ideas of

Christian beliefs and values, and therefore the Woodhull family became involved in activities surrounding the church community.³⁷

Sundays at the mission were not restricted to church worship. They were a time for the gathering of relatives and friends—a time-honored tradition that parallels the Omaha ways of community. For the Woodhull family, whose relatives were dispersed throughout the Omaha lands in both Bi-ku-de and the Village of the Make-Believe White Men, the trip to the mission was also a sacred event of gathering for Omaha people:

Mother always carried plenty of food for the day. Nearby the church stood a large wooden or round frame lodge where the Omaha families gathered to make coffee and to eat their dinners. . . . In the morning were the Sunday school and the church services and in the afternoon was the song service. . . . How well the Omahas sang these hymns. I have never forgotten.³⁸

These times of gathering, sharing, food, and song are significant to the Umóⁿhoⁿ tribe. Such practices and times of learning continued to hold a strong importance throughout Eunice Woodhull Stabler's life, particularly when she taught them to her children.

EDUCATION AND PERSISTENCE

Eunice Stabler's experiences with education began at birth, when she learned and lived the Omaha way, taught to her by her parents and Omaha relatives. However, her childhood was abruptly transformed after she attended the United States Indian Industrial School in Genoa, Nebraska, throughout her adolescence. After leaving school, her new American education did not overwhelm the young woman; Stabler strategically incorporated it into her Omaha knowledge. Stabler empowered herself with the tools of these teachings to build a legacy for future Omaha generations.

The Genoa Indian Industrial School opened in 1884 as the fourth nonreservation boarding

school in the United States. The creation of off-reservation boarding schools were initiated by the efforts of Capt. Richard Henry Pratt. As the founder of Carlisle Indian School in 1879—the first nonreservation boarding school, Pratt's ultimate goal was to educate and “civilize” Native Americans. These schools, as opposed to reservation boarding schools, forced children to be physically separated from their families and homes.³⁹ It originally opened with students from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota but eventually included children from the Ponca, Winnebago, Arapaho, Omaha, Arikara, and other Northern Plains tribes. The school, like most of the other boarding schools, exhibited poor living conditions. It was later revealed that “physical conditions in boarding schools were notoriously inadequate. Overcrowding, insufficient food, and improper treatment of sick children led to frequent epidemics.”⁴⁰ Diseases such as tuberculosis, trachoma, and epidemics of chicken pox and measles occurred in Genoa's facilities toward the end of the nineteenth century.⁴¹

Once at the industrial school in 1897, Stabler's path toward becoming an Omaha woman took a drastically different course. She was exposed to the regimented life and poor conditions of the Indian boarding school. Eunice was expected to cook, clean, sew, and perform other duties in strictly confined spaces and times. Stabler later recalled that at school she felt like a soldier: “The military influence was pronounced,” she wrote. “We were awakened at dawn . . . dressed in uniform . . . marched in companies to and from. . . . Was I a prisoner of war?” For the young adolescent, these boarding school experiences were harsh. Her writings reveal that the years she endured as “a military recruit in the Indian school” were part of an ongoing war against her heritage and culture. In her own words, Eunice was “a prisoner” to the domestic and military constructs of the boarding school experience (Figs. 2 and 3).⁴²

After graduation, Eunice Stabler returned home to the Omaha Reservation and became friends with other young Umóⁿhoⁿ survivors



FIG. 2. Eunice Woodhull Stabler (lower right) with other classmates at Genoa Indian Industrial School, Genoa, Nebraska, ca. 1902. Courtesy of the Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

of the boarding school experiences. One individual in particular, Susan La Flesche Picotte (the first Indigenous woman to become an American trained medical doctor), became Stabler's role model. She admired Picotte because she was devoted to her people throughout the Omaha Reservation in numerous ways. Picotte used her involvement in the Office of Indian Affairs, the Women's National Indian Association, and the Board of Home Missions of the United States Presbyterian Church to assume the roles of ambassador and intermediary for her people during an era when they faced forceful U.S. assimilation and acculturation policies. Although Picotte's affiliation with social reform appeared as though she represented “civilization” efforts, she never severed her Umóⁿhoⁿ ties nor discouraged those of her people who continued to live the Omaha way.⁴³ Stabler recognized Picotte's actions and realized that her heartbreaking experiences and painful years away from home could be



FIG. 3. Eunice Woodhull Stabler graduating from Genoa Indian Industrial School in 1906. Courtesy of the Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

reshaped into opportunities to be an advocate for preserving Omaha knowledge.⁴⁴



FIG. 4. Eunice Woodhull Stabler graduating from William Woods College, Fulton, Missouri, ca. 1911. Courtesy of the Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

In 1908 Eunice Stabler graduated from Boyles Business College in Omaha, Nebraska, and three years later was recruited to attend teacher education courses at William Woods College in Fulton, Missouri (Fig. 4). Shortly thereafter, in 1912, at the age of twenty-six, Stabler received another academic degree, this time from Bellevue College in Omaha, Nebraska.⁴⁵

Back with her Omaha people, Eunice Stabler was immediately employed as a stenographer in Walthill, Nebraska. In this same year she married former boarding school classmate George Stabler, a young Omaha man of the Ink'ésabe clan, or Black Shoulder Buffalo Clan (Fig. 5).⁴⁶

SEARCHING FOR STABILITY

Although they desired to stay in Nebraska, Eunice and George Stabler's honeymoon idea abruptly came to an end. It was not long before they recognized that the harsh conditions and



FIG. 5. Eunice and George Stabler's wedding photograph in Walthill, Nebraska, 1912. Courtesy of the Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

limited opportunities on the reservation were bleak. They decided to find a place that would offer them—and their future children—better opportunities for employment, education, and economic hope. These aspirations took the young couple beyond the borders of their Omaha lands. Even though leaving the Omaha Reservation meant they would no longer be surrounded by their homelands and relatives, Stabler believed that they needed to adapt in ways that her father had done, with the ultimate goal of survival.

Eunice and George Stabler learned several skills and trades in boarding schools that would aid them to labor in different America societies. With their schooling experiences behind them, the Stablers knew how to maintain their Omaha identity within mainstream America. Eunice Stabler especially devoted herself to the

role of an Omaha woman, just as her mother had taught her. As an Omaha wife, mother, and worker, she continued to preserve her heritage while also persisting in her role as a modern Indigenous woman.

After their marriage, the Stablers followed job opportunities around the country—to Oregon, Colorado, and Virginia—forcing them to be migratory for the first six years of their marriage.⁴⁷ However, this pattern abruptly changed in 1918 when Eunice Stabler gave birth to her first child, Hollis Dorion Stabler. Becoming a mother forever changed Stabler's world. She assumed the role as her son's primary caretaker and set aside her career ambitions. Following Hollis's birth, the Stablers moved back to Nebraska so their new baby could be surrounded by his family and be deeply rooted and reared in his heritage.⁴⁸

The Stablers settled on the land owned by Long Wing (Spafford Woodhull) located just outside Rosalie and Walthill, and both of them found jobs. Eunice Stabler capitalized on her writing skills and became a reporter for the *Rosalie Ripsaw* newspaper in the small community of Rosalie, Nebraska, while George Stabler was a mail carrier for nearby communities.

Only one year after returning to the reservation they welcomed their second son, Robert "Bobby" Dawes Stabler, into the world. This birth resulted in both excitement and fear for the young couple. Although they both secured a steady income, it did not fully support their growing family. Eunice Stabler was less inclined to work outside her home, especially with two young children to care for. Again, her world changed as she watched her family creep closer to impoverished conditions.⁴⁹ As Hollis remembers from his mother's stories, "She was always telling us that they almost went hungry. At one point, my mother told my father, 'I don't know where we're going to be tomorrow; we only have one chicken left!'"⁵⁰

Problems of poverty, desperation, and instability erupted throughout the Omaha Reservation, especially in the thirty to forty years following the introduction of land allotment in the 1800s. The advent of land-leasing resulted

in destructive consequences for Omaha individuals and families. Taking advantage of the vulnerability of the Omaha, white bootleggers trafficked liquor illegally in and around the borders of the reservation. These bootleggers used the lure of alcohol to coerce Omaha landowners to make impaired decisions about their land sales. Then they "relieved the Omaha of their lands by committing fraud, by using whiskey, and by encouraging Indians to go into debt."⁵¹ By the 1950s the land allotment policies and ensuing scandals left the Umóⁿhoⁿ Nation with only a strip of land (located along the Missouri River) that remained from their originally allotted lands. The loss of one's land sharply affected Omaha morale, and in many instances, individuals looked to alcohol for an escape. "Since land represented existence, identity, and a place of belonging . . . Omahas found that their whole way of life was now under full assault."⁵² This connection between land and identity would emerge as a constant underlying theme in Eunice Stabler's writing.

This gloominess on the Omaha Reservation heavily influenced Eunice and George Stabler's ultimate decision to physically escape the desolate atmosphere of the reservation. Within a year after Bobby's birth, the Stablers again relocated, this time settling in Sioux City, Iowa, a smaller Plains community thirty miles from their home in Walthill, Nebraska. There, George Stabler became a cream and butter tester at the Hanford Hazelwood Cream Company, and for additional income he continued to labor in various carpentry jobs. Eunice Stabler was relieved to settle in a growing urban community where she could not only rear her children in an economically sound home but also pass her knowledge of the Omaha way to another generation.

CIVIC CULTURE: BECOMING "OMAHA-AMERICAN"

By the time Stabler had her third child in 1922 (a daughter named Marcella Mary Stabler), her family was settled in Sioux City, a growing urban community in northwest Iowa.

Although they were removed from their network of family and kinship ties, Stabler viewed the civic culture as an opportunity for her children to attend a public school and become part of a diverse community. Since Sioux City was in close proximity to the Omaha Reservation and only a train ride away, their location allowed the Stablers to frequent their ancestral homelands for family birthdays, weddings, and funerals, as well as handgames and powwows.

In Sioux City, the Stablers lived in a neighborhood filled with families who represented a mixture of ethnic backgrounds. German, Italian, Winnebago, and Jewish families filled the block of houses on the southwest side of town. Hollis Stabler remembers how close they became with their neighbors, who invited them for cookouts and gatherings. These events were fun for his mother, as Hollis recalls, because "she liked to feed people."⁵³ Oftentimes, Eunice Stabler prepared these meals outside in their backyard over an open fire, cooking the way that her mother and grandmother had taught her as a young girl. Stabler conveyed these important traditions of gathering to her children by spending several hours everyday on their porch or in their yard.

When she was not feasting with her neighbors, Stabler and her husband soon discovered that their family, an old Italian man, and a family of Winnebago from down the street had something else in common: They enjoyed making music. In the Umóⁿhoⁿ Nation, "Song [is] an integral part of the life." Through songs, Omaha voice "emotions; both individual and social [and] embod[y] feelings and aspirations that [elude] expression in words."⁵⁴

Hollis Stabler remembers sitting many nights on the family porch while he listened to an unlikely chorus line: his mother singing in sharp falsetto, accompanied by his father's handmade flute, the deep, opera-style voice of their Italian neighbor, and the beat of the Winnebago family's drum. These gatherings were important to Hollis's understanding of the Omaha way because he was exposed to the significant meanings behind food, music, and community within his heritage. It is clear



FIG. 6. Annual Umó'ho' Indian Powwow in Macy, Nebraska, 1917. Courtesy of the Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

that Eunice Stabler did not employ America's domestic expectations of women that had been drilled into her actions at the Genoa boarding school. Within and around her home, Eunice Stabler practiced the Omaha way, and in doing so, passed these important lessons and traditions to her children.⁵⁵

Eunice Stabler made sure that these neighborhood gatherings were not the only times that her children were exposed to their ancestral heritage. The Stabler family made frequent visits back to their home: "To the Omahas, home mean[s] *tígthe*. In any language, no place is more sacred, no memory so cherished, as home."⁵⁶ Eunice Stabler emphasized this concept to her children during their trips back to Nebraska to attend birthday feasts, marriage celebrations, funerals, ceremonies, handgame events, and spiritual gatherings. Also, absolutely nothing kept Eunice Stabler and her family from attending the Omaha Powwow (Fig. 6).⁵⁷ The annual Omaha Powwow in Macy, Nebraska, became an event central to the Stabler family, and an event that always pulled them back to their Omaha home. "We always lived away, except for the Omaha

Powwow," Hollis remembers. The powwow kept the Stablers in Walthill or Macy for a couple of weeks. Hollis recalls, "Powwow time was our time to learn," he said.⁵⁸

Once in Nebraska, the Stabler children became part of their larger community—a community in which they learned more about their heritage and traditions. Eunice Stabler's children embraced their Umó'ho' ways by observing and interacting with their people through song, dances, ceremonies, and by learning from the stories and experiences of their elders. This provided them with a foundation of Omaha ways that continued to ground and center them throughout their childhood and adult years.⁵⁹

Throughout her life, Eunice Stabler never allowed physical distance to interfere with her determination to educate her children about Omaha practices, responsibilities, and knowledge. She insisted that Hollis, Bobby, and Marcella be connected with their heritage. As an Omaha mother she coordinated the opportunities for her children to live their traditions, relate to their Omaha identities, and impart these teachings to future Omaha generations.

PRESERVATION THROUGH WRITING

Throughout her adult years and especially during moments of struggle and turmoil, Eunice Stabler relied on her writing as a tool to share her philosophy through poetry and essays. A majority of Stabler's subject matter focused on her Umóⁿhoⁿ heritage and lands. Stabler's written works reveal her constant longing to communicate her Omaha identity and the cultural landscape of her people. Stabler utilized what Hollis refers to as "the most important part of her education"—her writing—as a tool to reconcile this longing by preserving the stories, traditions, knowledge, and sacred spaces of the Omaha Nation.

In 1943 Eunice Stabler published the first collection of her writings in a book titled *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers*. In this book, Stabler creates a ritualistic journey that leads to the interconnectedness of place, particularly through the land, history, and culture of the Omaha people. As Gretchen Bataille and Kathleen Sands discuss in *American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives*, these themes are characteristic of those included in American Indian women's autobiographies, such as "emphasis on event, attention to the sacredness of language, concern with landscape, affirmation of cultural values and tribal solidarity."⁶⁰

In particular, the key theme of Stabler's book—her people's sacred landscapes—reveals her as a woman ahead of her time, empowered through her writing to reclaim her native lands and their sacred sites. In *Where the Lightning Strikes: The Lives of American Indian Sacred Places*, Peter Nabakov describes the significance of sites and landscapes in Indigenous traditions and practices:

Through place-names . . . they cherished the places where they gathered ritual materials, the meadows where they collected plants, the rapids and riverbanks where they fished and the woods, seas and plains where they hunted. . . . All over North America the landscape is saturated with Indian memories and stories that describe such beliefs.⁶¹

In her book, Stabler reconstructs the deep-rooted landmarks that play a role in the folklore, history, and customs of her people—the Omaha Nation. The western bluffs that overlook the Missouri River, or Nishúdeke, meaning "turbid" or "Smokey Water" to the Omaha, is a stretch of land which she writes is "rich in lore of the early life of the Omaha Indian. . . . On these bluffs were the ancient Omaha's camping grounds, where traditional life was lived by him before the white man came" (Fig. 7).⁶² Stabler documents several landmarks within this area—such as the ancient connections to Blackbird Hill and the sacredness of the Holy Fireplace—which according to her, lost their meaning and almost escaped Omaha memory.

One of the landmarks Stabler wrote about at length is Council Point. Council Point was the place where the Omaha Council of Seven Chiefs—the hereditary chief leaders of the nation—held ceremonies and made decisions that represented the interest of the entire Umóⁿhoⁿ Nation. However, the Council of Seven Chiefs underwent significant changes, which Stabler wrote "were brought by the influences of traders or government officials."⁶³ Here Stabler references the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act in 1934 and the subsequent development of a new Omaha tribal constitution.

The Indian Reorganization Act, or IRA (also known as the Howard-Wheeler Act), was a measure introduced by John Collier's Indian New Deal reform. Collier, commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1933-1945, pushed for new policies that would conserve rather than eradicate Native American cultures and resources and provide a foundation for religious tolerance and freedom.⁶⁴ In doing so, the IRA also attempted to decrease the amount of federal control over Native American affairs and increase tribal self-government. Upon its official passage, Indian tribes were expected to establish new tribal governments, which included drafting a tribal constitution.

An anthropologist who had limited knowledge of the former makeup of Omaha political traditions drafted the Nation's constitution



FIG. 7. *Missouri River and the bluffs, looking east from the Omaha Reservation, July 2004.* Photo by Elaine M. Nelson.

under the IRA. He drastically botched the new Umó^{ho} constitution when he wrote the section that established the Omaha tribe's new system of government. This official, "basing representation on the seven clans traditionally involved in tribal decision making, forgot that the clans were not equal in electoral strength, and because the majority rule, one or two [clans] usually dominated the council elections."⁶⁵

When the tradition of the Umó^{ho} Nation's Council of Seven Chiefs (which for centuries allowed for *equal* representation) suffered under this new political system, the location of Council Point suffered as well. It was never again used for chieftain ceremonies and rituals. This event makes Stabler's written reflection even more significant, for she "realizes the clanship and the chieftain circle were the basic foundations of past traditional life and government of our forefathers," but that these systems would not be reinstated for the Omaha. Stabler wrote, "Council Point stands a mute witness to all these changes that have taken place in the

life of the Omaha Indian . . . a stone marker, encircled with a fence" is its only recognition.⁶⁶

Writing about her tribal landscapes allowed Stabler to protect their stories and importance in her memory. Stabler's written journey through time, space, and the lands of her forefathers reveals how Omaha folklore, traditional ceremonies, spiritual beliefs, and cultural practices are connected to the land. Through her memory and her writing, she preserves this journey and these traditions for her children and future Omaha generations.

PAINFUL TRANSITIONS AND PERSEVERANCE

In the midst of revising and editing the draft of her book, Eunice Stabler's life was struck by a series of personal tragedies. On January 15, 1942, her daughter, Marcella, died at the age of nineteen due to complications of juvenile-onset diabetes.⁶⁷ The pain of losing her only daughter at such a young age never passed from Stabler's world, even with time.

Two years later, in 1944, Stabler wrote in her journal, "Today we were informed by the United States War Department that our son Bob was killed in action in Italy." Losing yet another child traumatized and shocked Stabler when she wrote, "It seems all the sorrow in the world has piled into our lives."⁶⁸ Easing Stabler's torment, a wounded Hollis, also fighting in Italy, returned to America less than a year after Bob's death.

Eunice Stabler attempted to reconcile her pain through writing. She began to write profusely about topics concerning not only the Umóⁿhoⁿ Nation but Native Americans throughout the country. She openly and aggressively objected to the era of United States policies of what became known as "termination and relocation." From 1947 to 1967 laws were introduced to end all legal relationships between the federal government and American Indians. "Native Americans were to be fully assimilated into American life . . . the trust was over. Federal services were to be stopped. Reservations were to be abolished. Tribal assets no longer existed."⁶⁹ Beginning in 1951 the Bureau of Indian Affairs began to enroll "surplus" reservation residents to cities throughout the United States. This portion of the "termination and relocation" policies was a measure taken to physically isolate Native people from their relatives, homelands, and tribal cultures.⁷⁰

In response to these policies, Stabler wrote:

The federal administrative policy, as we all know, is to terminate the American Indian tribes as quickly as possible. . . . [I] beg the public to glance at the Indian side in the situation that faces the Indian people today. . . . A mass and hasty liquidation of the American Indian and his tribal and individual property from federal supervision would be a tragic error.⁷¹

Furthermore, she asserted, "Discrimination, prejudice, intolerance will all flee when we understand other peoples. These cruel practices, which leave scars on the heart and soul of man and he loses confidence in himself and his fellow-man, will diminish as you strive to understand

us."⁷² Eunice Stabler used her writing as a tool not only to celebrate her identity and safeguard the stories of her heritage but to openly resist the political and social treatments of Indigenous peoples throughout the United States.

STABLER'S LEGACY

In her book Eunice Stabler wrote, "Customs, traditions, and religious beliefs may have altered . . . but today the modern Omaha still cherishes these sacred heritages."⁷³ Until her death in 1963, Eunice Stabler continued to teach the Omaha way, just as her parents had taught and emphasized to her as a child and into adulthood. Today, Stabler's child Hollis, her grandchildren, and great-grandchildren honor this legacy (Fig. 8).

In 1977 Hollis and his wife, LaVeeda, permanently returned to the Omaha Reservation, where Hollis taught art at the Umóⁿhoⁿ Nation Public Schools in Macy, Nebraska. He was known among his students and the community for assigning art projects related to the Omaha way.⁷⁴

Hollis Stabler was eighty-nine when he passed away on November 12, 2007. I last saw him—and little Rambo too, of course—in July 2007. He was just as quick-witted and delightful as the first moment we had met almost five years earlier. During our talks, he always repeated the same story: He learned about the importance of education from his mother, his mother's intelligence and legacy remain in the Umóⁿhoⁿ Nation, and his mother rooted him deeply in understanding the Omaha way. Then he in turn passed it to his children, and now his children passed this knowledge to their children. "Anything" about Omaha heritage, Hollis always said, "to cook, handgame, dancing . . . everything" (Figs. 9 and 10).⁷⁵

Eunice Stabler's headstone reads, "The Salvation of My People is Education." Stabler used various aspects from her years of American education as tools for survival in America's mainstream. She took these tools and used them to empower and teach her children. Stabler's purpose as a mother and writer was



FIG. 8. Wehnona "Noni" Stabler at a powwow in April 2009. She is wearing a dress that she made with beadwork from her father's vest and breechcloth. She is also carrying Hollis Stabler's tobacco bag. Courtesy of Noni Stabler.

to educate her children to learn about and embrace their Umóⁿhoⁿ identity and to live the Omaha way. She once wrote, "What our fathers handed down to us we hand to our posterity."⁷⁶ Through Hollis and his children, Eunice Stabler's teachings are instilled in the Omaha Nation, and her written works continue to preserve her legacy.



FIG. 9. Hollis Dorion Stabler with Rambo at home in Walthill, Nebraska, 2003. Courtesy of Elaine M. Nelson.



FIG. 10. Eunice Woodhull Stabler, ca. 1915. Courtesy of the Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

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NOTES

1. This story is based on my first interview with Hollis Dorion Stabler, Walthill, NE, May 12, 2003. The term "Omaha" corresponds to the current orthology of the word "Umó'ho'n," and both will be used interchangeably throughout this article.

2. Eunice Woodhull Stabler, "My Biography" (unpublished essay), Eunice Woodhull Stabler (La-ta-we-sa) Papers, RG2585.AM, Series 2, Box 2, Folder 11, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, NE (hereafter cited as "Stabler Papers, NSHS"). Alice Fletcher and Francis La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 1:165. All references to the orthology used in *The Omaha Tribe* are to the first volume of the book. Fletcher and La Flesche recorded this female bird clan name by spelling it "Tha'tawęco," which they defined as "Pale Tha'tada Woman," meaning Pale Woman of the Bird Clan. The current orthology developed by the partnership between Umó'ho' Nation Public Schools (Macy, NE) and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln spells this name "Thátaweso." In their letters and writings, Eunice Woodhull Stabler and her family members always used the spelling of "La-ta-we-sa" for her Omaha name. (Orthology systems will hereafter be cited as "Fletcher and La Flesche orthology" and "UNPS/UNL orthology.")

3. United States federal policies toward Native Americans in the late 1800s and into the 1930s centered on ideas of assimilation and suppression of Indigenous cultures, religions, languages, and traditional lifeways. This was enforced through a campaign to force Native people to adopt the education, landownership practices, and behaviors exhibited by mainstream Americans. Assimilation policies attempted to "civilize" Native Americans to prepare them to become American citizens. See

Frederick E. Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).

4. For more in-depth studies of boarding school experiences see Brenda J. Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), and Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

5. Hazel W. Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity: Modern Pan-Indian Movements* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1971), 18.

6. Diana Meyers Bahr, *Viola Martinez, California Paiute: Living in Two Worlds* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 156.

7. Hertzberg, *The Search for an American Indian Identity*, 19.

8. P. Jane Hafen, "Gertrude Simons Bonnin: For the Indian Cause," in *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives*, ed. Theda Perdue (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 138-39.

9. K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), xiii.

10. *Ibid.*, xii.

11. Qtd. in Judith A. Boughter, *Betraying the Omaha Nation, 1790-1916* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 208.

12. Mark Awakuni-Swetland, *Dance Lodges of the Omaha People: Building from Memory* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 97.

13. Julie Cruikshank, "Discovery of Gold on the Klondike: Perspectives from Oral Tradition," in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, ed. Jennifer S.H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1996), 438-39.

14. Stabler Papers, NSHS. Hollis Stabler's interviews with Victoria Smith also serve as an incredible wealth of information for my ongoing research on Eunice Stabler. See these interviews in his recently published memoirs, *No One Ever Asked Me: The World War II Memoirs of an Omaha Indian Soldier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

15. Hollis Stabler, "Journal," Series 2, Box 1, Folder 1, Stabler Papers, NSHS.

16. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 1:70.

17. David Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness: The Dispossession of the Nebraska Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 6.

18. *Ibid.*, 7.

19. Benson Tong, *Susan La Flesche Picotte, M.D.: Omaha Indian Leader and Reformer* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 6.

20. Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness*, 43.

21. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 1:44-45; Tong, *Susan La Flesche Picotte*, 15-16.

22. Awakuni-Swetland, *Dance Lodges of the Omaha People*, 7.

23. I refrain from using terminology such as "progressives" and "traditionalists" in this study. However, it may be helpful to understand that in this case "progressives" was a term sometimes used by government agents and missionaries to describe Indians who they believed more readily incorporated American standards into their culture, as opposed to "traditionalists," who they viewed as those who tended to resist the ways of the emerging American society. See Tong, *Susan La Flesche Picotte*, 16.

24. New Moon's Omaha name was "Me-gltha-ta-en," which translates to "return of the moon" and means "New Moon." This spelling was used by the family. In the Fletcher and La Flesche orthology it appears as, "Mi'gthitoⁿiⁿ," 190; UNPS/UNL orthology, "Migthitoⁿiⁿ." New Moon's father's name was "Wah-shin-ska" (which translates to "wisdom" and means "Wise Man") and her mother's name was "Me-um-bah-the" (which translates to "moon that travels by day" and means "Bright Moon"). These spellings were used by the family. Fletcher and La Flesche orthology, "I'shta'suⁿda," 141, "Wazhiⁿčka," 192, and "Mi'oⁿbathiⁿ," 165; UNPS/UNL orthology, "Wazhiⁿska," and "Mioⁿbathiⁿ."

25. Eunice Stabler, "My Biography," Stabler Papers, NSHS.

26. It is not known if New Moon's education was a result of her parents' decision or forced by missionaries or government agents.

27. Stabler, "My Biography," Stabler Papers, NSHS.

28. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 1:160; UNPS/UNL orthology. The "two grand divisions" of the Omaha Nation are made up of the Sky people and the Earth people, and are each divided into five different clans, which are further divided into subclans. All ten Omaha clans exist in tribal memory, each containing separate subclans that recognize distinctive taboos, rites, and names. One of the rules of marriage that is strictly obeyed prevents "marriage between the members of the [subclans] or subdivisions of a [clan]." Upon marriage, the woman enters into her husband's clan, and the couple's children are raised within their father's clan. See Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 1:134-94.

29. The family spelled his name "Ah-hin-sna-dai." Fletcher and La Flesche orthology, "A'hiⁿçnede," 167; UNPS/UNL orthology, "Ahiⁿsnede."

30. "Eunice Woodhull Stabler Family Tree," Series 5, Box 3, Folder 1, Stabler Papers, NSHS.

31. Stabler, "My Biography," Stabler Papers, NSHS.

32. Qtd. in Tong, *Susan La Flesche Picotte*, 17-18.

33. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 2:329.

34. Ibid., 326, 329.

35. Eunice Woodhull Stabler, "Tipi" (unpublished essay), Series 2, Box 2, Folder 18, Stabler Papers, NSHS.

36. Ibid.

37. Stabler, "My Biography," Stabler Papers, NSHS.

38. Ibid. It is not clear if the hymns Stabler heard in her childhood were sung in English or in Omaha. It is very likely they were sung in the Umóⁿhoⁿ language, for in 1887, Rev. William Hamilton of the Omaha Mission School published *Hymns in the Omaha Language*, the first document to translate English into Omaha through nonlinguistic methods. The structure Stabler mentions here was probably an old barn that resided near the mission church. However, a "round frame lodge" may have also been a dance lodge, a structure the Omaha utilized for secret society dances that were forced underground during this era. In order to avoid government and missionary persecution for practicing their rituals, Omaha constructed dance lodges throughout the reservation as a place to maintain their culture. The lodges were inconspicuous in that they meshed with the architecture of the surrounding countryside. See Awakuni-Swetland, *Dance Lodges of the Omahas*.

39. Margaret Connell Szasz, *Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 9-10.

40. Ibid., 2.

41. Wilma A. Daddario, "'They Get Milk Practically Every Day': The Genoa Indian Industrial School, 1884-1934," *Nebraska History* 73 (Spring 1992): 2-10.

42. Stabler, "My Biography," Stabler Papers, NSHS.

43. Valerie Sherer Mathes, "Susan LaFlesche Picotte, M.D.: Nineteenth-Century Physician and Reformer," *Great Plains Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 172-86.

44. Hollis Stabler interview, May 12, 2003.

45. Stabler received college degrees from Boyles Business School, Omaha, Nebraska, ca. 1908, William Woods College, Fulton, Missouri, 1911, and Bellevue College, Omaha, Nebraska, 1912. Stabler, "My Biography," Stabler Papers, NSHS.

46. "Woodhull-Stabler," n.p., n.d., Series 1, Box 1, Folder 7, Stabler Papers, NSHS.

47. Hollis Stabler interview, February 8, 2004; Photo album, "La-ta-we-sa," Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, OK. Eunice is pictured on the front steps of a white house in a photograph

marked "Denver, CO, 1914." Another photograph shows them touring Pike's Peak in 1914. The Stablers are also pictured in a group photograph in a wooded area marked "Warm Springs, Oregon, 1915." It is quite likely that the Stablers were employed in the Indian Service of the Office of Indian Affairs during these years. Current research by Cathleen Cahill discusses the development of the Indian Service from the end of the nineteenth century and into the Progressive Era. Cahill shows how race and gender influenced the federal government assimilation policies during this period, and how Indigenous women employees in particular played a role in the Indian Service. I continue to investigate the possibility that Eunice Stabler—and her husband—were employed in the Indian Service. See Cahill, "Only the Home Can Found a State": Gender, Labor, and the United States Indian Service, 1869-1928" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2004).

48. *Walthill Times*, "Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Stabler—A Son," ca. February 1918, Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, OK; Eunice Woodhull Stabler, "A Baby's Book," Hollis Stabler's baby book, Hollis Stabler Family Collection, Pawhuska, OK.

49. Stabler and Smith, *No One Ever Asked Me*, 6.

50. Hollis Stabler quoting his mother, Eunice Stabler, Hollis Stabler interview, February 8, 2004.

51. Boughter, *Betraying the Omaha Nation*, 188. In 1883 anthropologist Alice Fletcher was assigned "special agent" to oversee and supervise the process of land allotment on the Omaha Reservation. Robin Ridington and Dennis Hastings (In'aska), *Blessing for a Long Time: The Sacred Pole of the Omaha* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 10.

52. Tong, *Susan LaFlesche Picotte*, 110.

53. Hollis Stabler interview, July 31, 2003.

54. Fletcher and La Flesche, *The Omaha Tribe*, 2:373.

55. Hollis Stabler interview, July 31, 2003, and February 8, 2004.

56. Stabler and Smith, *No One Ever Asked Me*, 119.

57. Hollis Stabler interview, July 31, 2003, and February 8, 2004.

58. Hollis Stabler interview, July 31, 2003.

59. *Ibid.*

60. Gretchen M. Bataille and Kathleen Mullen Sands, *American Indian Women: Telling Their Lives* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 3.

61. Peter Nabakov, *Where the Lightning Strikes: The Lives of American Indian Sacred Places* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), xiii.

62. Eunice Stabler wrote the word as "Ni-shu-da" in her book. Eunice W. Stabler, *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers* (Wichita: Wichita Eagle Press, 1943), 12, 17. The author uses the UNPS/UNL orthology. Fletcher and La Flesche orthology, "Nishu'de ke," 91.

63. Stabler, *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers*, 33.

64. John R. Wunder, "Retained by The People": *A History of American Indians and the Bill of Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 63-64.

65. *Ibid.*, 77.

66. Stabler, *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers*, 36-37.

67. "Standard Certificate of Death," State Department of Health, State of Oklahoma, 1942.

68. Eunice Stabler, "Personal Notes, 16 March 1944," Series 2, Box 2, Folder 12 Stabler Papers, NSHS.

69. Wunder, *Retained by the People*, 99.

70. *Ibid.*, 105-7.

71. Eunice Stabler, untitled journal entry, Series 2, Box 2, Stabler Papers, NSHS.

72. Stabler, "Adjustment to the City," Series 2, Box 2, Stabler Papers, NSHS.

73. Stabler, *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers*, 36.

74. Stabler interview by Victoria Smith, Walthill, NE, October 9, 2003.

75. Hollis Stabler interview, February 8, 2004.

76. Stabler, *How Beautiful the Land of My Forefathers*, 36.